

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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SUBJ: TENSIONS EASE AS COALITION-OPPOSITION TALKS CONTINUE

REF : A. PARAMARIBO 0219; B. PARAMARIBO 0216

1. FOLLOWING PEEONAL INTERCESSION OF DUTCH PRIMMIN DEN UYL AND PRESSURES FROM LABOR FEDERATIONS, VHP OPPOSITION OVER WEEKEND CALLED OFF MASS INDIAN AND JAVANESE DEMONSTRATIONS, CENTRAL MARKET AND BUSINESS CLOSURES, SCHEDULED FOR TODAY. TALKS BETWEEN NPK COALITION AND VHP RESUMED SATURDAY IN EFFORT REACH UNDERSTANDING ON OPPOSITION PARTICIPATION IN PRE-INDEPENDENCE ARRANGEMENTS AND FURTHER DELIBERATIONS TOOK PLACE TODAY. FURTHER MEETING AGREED AFTER TRI-PARTITE CONFERENCE ADJOURNS LATER THIS WEEK.

2. WORRIED BY RACIAL DISORDERS AND PROSPECT OF MORE TODAY, MIN PRES ARRON AND NPK LEADERSHIP AGREED CONFER AGAIN WITH VHP AFTER LONG SESSION WITH DEN UYL. VHP CHAIRMAN LACHMON ALSO CONSENTED, ON URGING OF DEN UYL AND TWO SIDES MET FOR OVER THREE HOURS. THEY QUICKLY AGREED THAT ELEVEN-POINT LIST

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OF VHP POSITIONS COULD SERVE AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSIONS WHICH

CONTINUED TODAY. FOLLOWING SATURDAYS MEETING, OPPOSITION SPONSORED SERIES OF RADIO ANNOUNCEMENTS IN HINDI AND JAVANESE CALLING OFF DEMONSTRATIONS AND ADVISING FOLLOWERS TO REPORT TO REGULAR JOBS.

3. TENSIONS OF LAST FEW DAYS HAVE SHARPLY ABATED, ALTHOUGH FIRES CONTINUE TO BE SET BY UNAPPREHENDED ARSONISTS. (FRAME BUILDING BELONGING TO EDUCATION MINISTRY GUTTED LAST NIGHT.) TOUR OF DOWNTOWN SECTION THIS MORNING SHOWED CENTRAL MARKET OPERATING NORMALLY, THOUGH SOME INDIAN STALL HOLDERS AND SIDEWALK VENDORS ABSENT. WHAT WAS TO BE DEMONSTRATION RALLYING POINT, AREA AROUND GANDHI MEMORIAL, VIRTUALLY DESERTED. GOVERNOR FERRIER TOLD ME TODAY THERE IS DOUBT THAT FIRES ATTRIBUTED TO VHP BACKERS ALL HAVE SO ORIGINATED. SOME ARE WONDERING IF FIRES ARE ACTIONS OF ELEMENTS HAVING AN INTEREST IN MAINTAINING NPK - OPPOSITION ANIMOSITIES AT HIGH PITCH. THIS THEORY COULD POINT TO EITHER SMALL COMMUNIST PARTY, ALWAYS READY TO FISH IN TROUBLED WATERS, OR TO ELEMENTS OF LEFTIST PNR, MINORITY COALITION MEMBER NERVOUS OVER ANY SIGNS OF VHP RAPPROACHMENT WITH MODERATE NPS, DOMINANT MEMBER OF CREOLE COALITION.

4. NPK-VHP TALKS ARE CENTERING ON ARRAY OF OPPOSITION POINTS. THESE RANGE FROM DELINEATION OF BORDERS PRIOR INDEPENDENCE THROUGH CONSTITUTIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS GUARANTEES TO DIRECT ELECTION OF A PRESIDENT; OF THE ELEVEN POINTS AGREEMENT SHOULD BE EASY ON A FEW, IMPOSSIBLE ON OTHERS. LACHMON HAS ISSUED STATEMENT EXPRESSING SATISFACTION NPK SEEMS TO BE LISTENING TO OPPOSITION AND THAT AS LONG AS THIS SO, "BROTHERLY HAND" WILL REMAIN EXTENDED; NO DEMONSTRATIONS.

5. COMMENT: EVENTS OF PAST FEW DAYS NOW APPEAR AS DISGUISED BLESSING SINCE THEY HAVE TRIGGERED A KIND OF DETENTE WHICH MODERATES SUCH AS VHP CO-VICE CHAIRMAN HINDOORIE AND STAATEN SPEAKER WIJNTUIN HAVE BEEN ADVOCATING FOR MONTHS. THERE IS STILL CHANCE OF BREAK-DOWN WITH ATTENDENT RECRIMINATIONS, OF COURSE, BUT FOR FIRST TIME SINCE 1973 ELECTIONS THERE IS REASON FOR OPTIMISM THAT OPPOSITION WILL EMERGE AS RESPONSIBLE PARTNER ON ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE IF NPK NOW WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THROUGH A FEW CONCESSIONS VHP'S NEED TO FEEL NEEDED.

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6. ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT ARISING FROM RECENT EVENTS COULD BE LESS DESIRABLE. THE LABOR FEDERATIONS HAVE GAINED CONSIDERABLY IN PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE THROUGH THEIR SUCCESS IN HELPING BRING ABOUT A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE COALITION AND THE OPPOSITION. THE FEDERATIONS HAVE OVERNIGHT BECOME A MUCH STRONGER POLITICAL FORCE IN THE COUNTRY AND THEY WILL HENCEFORTH COMMAND A LARGER AND MORE ATTENTIVE AUDIENCE FOR THEIR VIEWS.
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